

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

Attached hereto is a marked up version of the changes made to the specification and claims by the current amendment. The attached page is captioned "Version With Markings to Show Changes Made."

Applicant has amended the claims to clarify further the subject invention.

The Examiner rejects Claims 1-66 under 35 U.S.C. §102(e) as being anticipated by Breneman et al. (U.S. Patent 5,974,135).

Applicant respectfully traverses the Examiner's rejections.

The present invention is directed to a call center in which flow connection modules associated with call center application programs allow data and telephone calls to be transferred from one computer program to another through simple programming invocation statements. Conventional call centers, in contrast, use a computing system external to the automatic call distributor or ACD to monitor the ACD to determine where the ACD has routed a call, e.g., an agent workstation. The external computing system may then forward call-related data to the agent workstation that received the call routed from the monitored ACD. Such a system is disclosed in Breneman, et al., which uses a teleservices workstation manager 201 and patron server program 208 to provide automatically data to the agent. (*See* Breneman et al. at col.14, line 56 to col. 15, line 39.) The present invention is particularly useful for software-controlled telephony applications or Softphones.

Breneman et al. fails to teach or suggest at least the italicized language in the following claims:

1. (Once Amended) A method for transferring data and telephone calls, comprising:

receiving a transfer request having a destination and data from an application associated with a telephone call;
creating a flow object associated with the telephone call;
establishing a communications link with a flow connection module at the destination;
transferring the data to the flow connection module using the communications link;
receiving from the flow connection module a telephone extension to which the telephone call is to be forwarded; and
requesting that the telephone call associated with the application be transferred to the destination.

15. (Once Amended) A method for automatically distributing calls in a call center having agents, comprising:

receiving a telephone call into the call center and placing the telephone call in a routing program having a first flow connection module;
determining an agent destination to receive the telephone call;
sending a transfer request to the first flow connection module, wherein the transfer request comprises the agent destination and data;
establishing a communications link between the first flow connection module and a second flow connection module at the agent destination;
transferring the data from the first flow connection module to the second flow connection module; and
requesting a computer-telephone interface ("CTI") link to transfer the telephone call from the routing program to the agent destination.

31. A system for transferring data and telephone calls having a computer-telephony integration ("CTI") link, comprising:

a first flow connection module having a first flow object configured to receive a transfer request having a destination and data from an application associated with a telephone call, to establish a communications link with the destination, to transfer the data to the destination, and to request the CTI link to transfer the telephone call to the destination; and
a second flow connection module associated with the destination that maintains the communications link with the first flow object.

42. A system for automatically distributing calls in a call center having agents and a computer-telephone interface ("CTI") link, comprising:

a routing program configured to receive a telephone call upon entry of the telephone call into the call center;
a locator configured to identify an agent destination to receive the telephone call;
a first flow connection module having a first flow object configured to receive a transfer request, having a destination and data for the telephone call from the routing

program, to establish a communications link with the destination, to transfer the data to the destination, and to request the CTI link to transfer the telephone call to the destination; and a second flow connection module associated with the destination that maintains the communications link with the first flow object.

56. A call center agent workstation, comprising:
a telephone configured to receive calls;
a call-handling application configured to process data associated with a call on the telephone; and
a flow connection module configured to receive a transfer request from the call-handling application to transfer the call and the data to a destination.

Breneman et al. is directed to a teleservices system, workstation configuration, and teleservices manager application that collectively provide for integrated concurrent interactions with various host computer systems, an automatic call management system, and Internet/Intranet servers. The system comprises an ACD and call management system, a customer database system, various host systems providing terminal emulation based access, and a hypermedia server. The system comprises a customer database 250 including customer data, such as customer name, account number, prior transactions, account balances, and other customer specific information.

The customer data is provided to the agent in a variety of ways. First when the ACD 220 receives a customer call, it uses automatic number identification to determine the phone number of the caller and provides the telephone number to a telephone server program 202 at the appropriate workstation 200. The telephone interface module 303 receives the telephone number from the services program 202. The teleservices workstation manager 201 then provides the telephone number to the search form 317, which automatically executes the search on the customer database 250. The retrieved customer data is provided to the patron server program 208 and displayed to the agent. (See Col. 14, line 50 to col.15, line 7.) Second when an agent is connected to a call that is

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not directly routed to the agent's teleservices workstation 200 as an incoming call (e.g., a transferred call, a conference call, or a direct dial call to a customer) by the ACD, the agent can actuate a Sync To Call button 409 which causes the currently connected telephone call to be treated as an incoming call. The steps under the first retrieval method are then performed automatically. (See Col. 15, lines 19-38.) Finally, an agent can transfer a call to a target agent or conference a target agent into a call and somehow cause the customer data at the source agent's teleservices workstation manager 201 to be structured as a message and forwarded over the network to the target agent's teleservices workstation manager 201, where it is displayed to the target agent. (See Col. 20 to col. 21, line 9.) Breneman et al., however, fails to teach *how* the data is forwarded as a message to the target agent by the source agent.

None of these techniques specifically teach the italicized features in the rejected claims. Breneman et al. not only fails to teach the invocation of programs such as flow objects, flow connection modules, a routing program, and a locator to effectuate transfer of a phone call and associated data but also the steps performed by the invoked programs.

Accordingly, the rejected claims are allowable over Breneman et al.

The dependent claims provide further reasons for allowance. For example, Claim 5 teaches that the requesting step occurs *after* the transferring step. (See also Claims 20, 41, and 54) Breneman et al. fails to teach or suggest this ordering of the call transfer and data transfer steps. Claim 6 is directed to a locator comprising a location table containing a ordering of addresses and corresponding call handling applications. Claim 8 requires the location table to comprise information relating to the availability of the call handling applications and an ordering of phone DNs and agent

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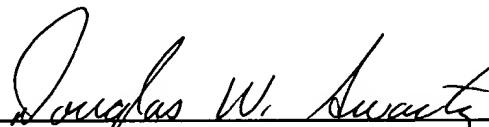
DNs associated with each call handling application. Claim 9 requires the location table contains an attribute set list, an address list, a call handling application list, and a status list and wherein the attribute set list contains attribute identifiers for call center application attributes. (*See also* Claims 23-24, 36, 48, and 54) None of these features are taught or suggested by Breneman et al.

Based upon the foregoing, Applicants believe that all pending claims are in condition for allowance and such disposition is respectfully requested. In the event that a telephone conversation would further prosecution and/or expedite allowance, the Examiner is invited to contact the undersigned.

Respectfully submitted,

SHERIDAN ROSS P.C.

By:


Douglas W. Swartz
Registration No. 37,739
1560 Broadway, Suite 1200
Denver, Colorado 80202-5141
(303) 863-9700

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VERSION WITH MARKINGS TO SHOW CHANGES MADE

In the Claims:

Claims 1-9, 11, 19, 23-24, 36, 41, 48, and 54 have been amended as follows:

1. (Once Amended) A method for transferring data and telephone calls, comprising:

receiving a transfer request having a destination and data from an application associated with a telephone call;

5 creating a flow object associated with the telephone call;

establishing a communications link with a flow connection module at the destination;

transferring the data to the [destination]flow connection module using the communications link;

10 receiving from the flow connection module a telephone extension to which the telephone call is to be forwarded; and

requesting that the telephone call associated with the application be transferred to the destination.

2. (Once Amended) The method of Claim 1 wherein the [transfer request is received by a] flow object [that] includes routines for establishing the communications link with [a]the flow connection module at the destination.

3. (Once Amended) The method of Claim 1, further comprising:

receiving a call transfer notification from the flow connection module at the destination; and

5 disconnecting the communications link with the flow connection module at the destination after receiving the call transfer notification.

4. (Once Amended) The method of Claim 1, further comprising:

determining a profile for the telephone call;

referencing data in a locator module to determine an appropriate destination address for the telephone call; and

5 [obtaining an available destination address prior to]thereafter establishing the communications link with the destination.

5. (Once Amended) The method of Claim 1, [further comprising:

transferring the telephone call to the destination after requesting that the telephone call be transferred to the destination]wherein the requesting step occurs after the transferring step.

6. (Once Amended) The method of Claim [5]4, [further comprising:

notifying the destination of the telephone call transfer prior to transferring the telephone call]wherein the locator comprises a location table containing a ordering of addresses and corresponding call handling applications.

7. (Once Amended) The method of Claim 1 wherein the flow object comprises a destination field to contain an identifier associated with the destination and a data field to contain the data and wherein receiving the transfer request further comprises:

[creating an instance of a flow connection object for the transfer request; and]
adding the data to the flow [connection] object.

8. (Once Amended) The method of Claim [1]6 wherein [establishing the communications link utilizes at least one computer-to-computer communication protocol]the location table comprises information relating to the availability of the call handling applications and an ordering of phone DNs and agent DNs associated with each call handling application.

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9. (Once Amended) The method of Claim [8]6 wherein the [at least one computer-to-computer communication protocol is TCP/IP]location table contains an attribute set list, an address list, a call handling application list, and a status list and wherein the attribute set list contains attribute identifiers for call center application attributes.

11. (Once Amended) The method of Claim 1 wherein the request to transfer the telephone call is sent in a format suitable for receipt by a computer-telephone interface ("CTI") link to a private branch exchange ("PBX") and wherein the establishing step comprises:

identifying a call-handling application associated with the destination; and
determining whether the call-handling application is presently active.

19. (Once Amended) The method of Claim 15, further comprising:
obtaining an available destination address prior to establishing the communications link; and
determining whether a call-handling application associated with the agent destination is at least one of presently active and available.

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23. (Once Amended) The method of Claim 15 wherein establishing the communications link between the first flow connection module and the second flow connection module utilizes at least one computer-to-computer communication protocol and wherein in the receiving step the routing program accesses a location table, the location table comprising information relating to the availability of the call handling applications and an ordering of phone DNs and agent DNs associated with each call handling application.

24. (Once Amended) The method of Claim 23 wherein the at least one computer-to-computer communication protocol is TCP/IP and wherein the location table comprises an attribute set list, an address list, a call handling application list, and a status list and wherein the attribute set list contains attribute identifiers for call center application attributes.

36. (Once Amended) The system of Claim 31 wherein the first flow object and the second connection module establish the communications link using at least one computer-to-computer communication protocol and further comprising:

a locator configured to identify an agent destination to receive the telephone call, wherein the locator comprises a location table containing an attribute set list, an address list, a call handling application list, and a status list and wherein the attribute set list contains attribute identifiers for call center application attributes.

41. (Once Amended) The system of Claim 31 wherein if the telephone call is disconnected, the first flow object is configured to send a disconnect message to the second connection module and wherein the telephone call is transferred to the destination after the data is transferred to the destination.

48. (Once Amended) The system of Claim 42 wherein the first flow object and the second flow connection module establish the communications link using at least one computer-to-computer communication protocol and wherein the locator comprises a location table containing an attribute set list, an address list, a call handling application list, and a status list and wherein the attribute set list contains attribute identifiers for call center application attributes.

54. (Once Amended) The system of Claim 42 wherein if the telephone call is disconnected, the first flow object is configured to send a disconnect message to the second connection module and wherein the telephone call is transferred to the destination after the data is transferred to the destination.